THE GREATEST GIFT.

One man would give his soul for wealth
And one craves manly grace;
One sighs for strength and perfect health,
One for a handsome face;
One longs to have the gift of song,
And one would hear the cheers
Of people as he strides along;
But oh that I might be as he
That puffs himself up foolishly,
Supposing all men stop to see
How splendid he appears.

One risks his life pursuing fame,
One burns the midnight oil
To make his name a deathless name,
And one for love may toil;
One tries to be supreme in art
And one wastes precious years
For power in the busy mart,
But none has gladness such as he
Has in his heart who blissfully
Boasts of himself and cannot see
How foolish he appears.
—S. E. Kiser, in Chicago Record-Herald.

AN OLD SONG

By Mrs. Moses P. Handy.

ALICE FRAZIER was 22 years of age when she married Silas Hopkins; she was 27 when he died, leaving her sole heir to all his wealth. Strictly speaking, it would be more correct to say that he had married her; she had small volition in the matter.

It had never occurred to her to regard Mr. Hopkins as a possible suitor. Almost as old as her father, his hair nearly as gray, he had been the familiar friend of the family ever since she could remember. As a child she sat on his knee, and he brought her toys and candy; as a young lady he kept her supplied with flowers and matinee tickets.

The Fraziers were well off enough to have all the necessaries and many of the luxuries of life, but they could not afford superfluities. Mr. Frazier was a director of the Bull Dog Security bank, in which also his moderate fortune was invested; having implicit confidence in the bank, he had not hesitated to trust all his eggs therein.

It was the old story of a bank president and treasurer speculating with the money of the depositors, and when the consequent crash came Mr. Frazier was overwhelmed, not only because of his personal loss, but by a crushing sense of responsibility for the losses sustained by others. He argued that as a director he should have detected and prevented dishonesty before it entailed ruin.

This was why the shock killed him; not instantly, since he lingered for days afterwards, but the news brought on a paralytic stroke from which he never entirely rallied.

Alice was away, visiting a wealthy relative at a fashionable seaside resort, when the calamity befell. It was Mr. Hopkins who sent the dispatch announcing her father's illness; Mr. Hopkins who with his coupe met her at the railway station when she hurried home.

Alice found her father tormented by anxiety, which amounted to anguish, about his wife and daughter. His life was insured for a trifling sum, so small that it was impossible they could live on it even after his death; meanwhile he was helpless and bankrupt.

Then it was that Mr. Hopkins asked Alice to be his wife, saying, simply, that he had loved her for years, but never thought to tell her so. Now he ventured to beg that in her time of need she would give him the right to provide for her and hers. And, without waiting for Alice to answer, he assured her father that to do so would be the greatest happiness which he could ask.

Oh, the look of ineffable relief which came into the face of the dying man! He did not ask if his daughter were willing, but, bracing himself to a final effort, took her hand and laid it in that of his friend. "God bless you both," he murmured, and then, with a smile on his lips, went out into the Great Hereafter.

After this it was more than ever Mr. Hopkins who did everything. Alice felt herself bound hand and foot; although the bonds were of softest silk, they were strong as steel.

How could she tell them about Dick? Dick, who loved her, and whom she loved dearly, but who had nothing but his youth and strength, his manly beauty and his pay as ensign in the United States navy? Dick, for whom she had promised to wait a lifetime, if need be, and who had sailed away on a three-years' cruise the day before Mr. Hopkins' telegram came.

There was a naval station near the watering place where Alice was visiting, and the officers of the man-o'-war in port were coming and going continually. As one of the prettiest girls at the Cape, Alice had been one of the belles of the season. She and Richard Harvie had fallen in love with each other, after the inconsequent manner of young things who take no thought of the future. They had settled it that they were to be married when Dick got his "step;" meanwhile he was to perform prodigies of valor, and it would be happiness to be engaged.

There were moments when Alice felt impelled to tell Mr. Hopkins the story and throw herself upon his magnanimity, which she felt sure would not fail, but refrained for the sake of her mother. Crushed and broken-hearted, Mrs. Frazier had but one joy left, the satisfaction which she took in her daughter's engagement to Mr. Hopkins. When it came to the point, Alice felt that she must suffer anything rather than deprive her of that.

She wrote to Dick and waited feverishly for an answer, her letter being scarcely more than an incoherent appeal for advice. Weeks passed, bringing no reply, and Alice bethought herself bitterly that it had been generally understood at the Cape that Miss Frazier was the only child of well-to-do parents.

She let Mr. Hopkins and her mother fix the wedding day, and resigned herself to the inevitable. It was on her marriage morn that the expected letter came:

"I am deeply grieved to hear of your loss and sympathize with you and your mother. In justice to yourself, since you ask my counsel, I must advise you to accept your wealthy suitor; a poor devil like me cannot expect to count.

"May you have all the happiness you deserve.

"Sincerely yours,
"R. S. HARVIE."

Alice read the note twice, seeing only the sarcasm, and not the pain between the lines. It stung her to the quick, yet she felt relief that he had accepted the situation so quietly. Then she burned the note and set herself steadfastly to forget the writer.

The majority of women are like cats, in that they purr to the hand which strokes them gently and accept life's cream graciously.

Mr. Hopkins adored his young wife and rejoiced to gratify her every whim. Moreover, Alice had always been fond of him, and to her surprise she found herself by no means unhappy. It would be too much to say that she ceased to remember Dick, but that young man was thousands of miles away, and the thinking did no harm, even though, during the Spanish war, she searched the newspapers for news of him, and felt a little thrill of pride and pleasure when she saw that Ensign Richard Scott Harvie had been promoted to a lieutenantcy for distinguished gallantry in action. She could not guess that Dick, pierced to the core by what he considered her mercenary course, had made up his mind to let her see that the loss had been hers.

That was shortly before Mr. Hopkins was taken ill—a long and serious illness—and Alice's wifely anxiety drove everything else out of her mind. Her husband's death was a genuine grief to her, all the greater because she felt that in return for his whole heart she had given him so little of her own. She missed him even more than she had done her father, and fell into a sort of apathy which lasted until she was roused by the discovery that her mother's health was failing.

"It is nothing serious," the doctors told her. "She needs change of air rather than medicine. Take her to Old Point Comfort. This climate is deadly at this time of year."

The change did good to both mother and daughter. Alice soon found herself taking more than a languid interest in life. The proximity of Portsmouth, with its navy yard, made naval uniforms a frequent sight, and revived old memories.

It was scarcely a surprise to her when, as she entered the hotel parlor one evening after dinner, she found herself face to face with Dick Harvie. Involuntarily she extended both hands.

"Oh, Dick!" she exclaimed, and recovered her self-possession almost instantly, feeling the chill of his manner.

Mr. Harvie barely touched her hand with one of his; the other arm rested in a sling. "Mrs. Hopkins?" he said, coolly. "This is an unexpected pleasure."

Alice shrank into herself, like a sea anemone, but she managed to ask, politely: "You have been wounded?"

"Only a trifle. My ship and I are both in dock for repairs. Excuse me," and he left her to join a group at the further end of the room.

Thereafter, although they saw each other almost every day, their intercourse was of the scantiest. Alice was persuaded that Dick wished to avoid her, and kept carefully out of his way. This was not difficult. All the other women lionized him as a hero, and Alice, as befitted her widow's weeds, held herself aloof from gay company. She had no idea that the old wound rankled still in her lover's heart, that he shunned her as a burnt child dreads the fire.

"He despises me too much to notice me," she told herself, bitterly, and devoted herself more tenderly to her mother.

A week went by thus; then fate led Dick Harvie past the door of the music room, where he heard a well-remembered voice in song. He paused behind the heavy portiere in time to hear Alice sing the last line of "Annie Laurie." "How beautifully you sing those Scotch ballads," said one admiring voice.

"Pray don't stop," cooed another.

"You know 'Auld Robin Gray,' do you not, Mrs. Hopkins?" asked the accompanist, a musician in the pay of the hotel. "Pray sing it for us; it is so admirably adapted to your voice," and she played the prelude without waiting for yea or nay.

There was a little tremor in Alice's voice as she began, or at least Dick fancied so, but as she sang it disappeared, and she held her little audience spellbound. Dick, listening behind the curtain, scarcely breathed while the thrilling tones rehearsed the pathetic tale of filial self-sacrifice. It moved him to the depths, and his eyes were moist as she sang the last verse:

"I gang like a ghaist, and I carena to spin;
I daurna think o' Jamie, for that wad be a sin;
But I'll do my best a gude wife to be,
For auld Robin Gray is a kind mon to me."

As the song ended, with a half sob which was the perfection of artistic finish, there was a murmur of applause and earnest requests for more. But Alice excused herself, smilingly; she had already left her mother too long.

As she passed through the portiere, on her way out, her eyes cast down to hide the tears which were ready to start, a hand was laid on her arm, and she lifted her lashes to meet Dick's eyes with the old love-look in them which she knew so well.

"Was that really and truly the way of it, Alice?" he whispered.

And Alice could only sob, under her breath: "Oh, Dick!"

KILLING A MAN.

Soldier Describes His Emotions After Having Brought Down an Enemy in Battle.

Here is a brigade of us in battle line across an old meadow; our right and left join other brigades. We have thrown down the rail fence, gathered logs and brush and sod, and erected a breastwork. It is only a slight one, but enough to shelter us while lying down. A division of the enemy breaks cover half a mile away and comes marching down upon us.

They are going to charge us, says a writer in the Detroit Free Press. Orders run along the line and we are waiting until every bullet, no matter if fired by a soldier with his eye shut, must hit a foe. I select my man while he is yet beyond range. I have eyes for no other. He is a tall, soldierly fellow, wearing the stripes of a sergeant. As he comes nearer I imagine that he is

I HAVE A REST FOR MY GUN.

looking at me fixedly as I aim at him. I admire his coolness. He looks neither to the right nor to the left. The man on his right is hit and goes down, but he does not falter.

I am going to kill that man. I have a rest for my gun on the breastworks, and when the order comes to fire I cannot miss him. He is living his last minute on earth! We are calmly waiting until our volley shall prove a veritable flame of death. Now they close up the gaps, and we can hear the shouts of their officers as they make ready to charge. My man is still opposite me. He still seems to be looking at me and no one else. I know the word is coming in a few seconds more, and I aim at his chest. I could almost be sure of hitting him with a stone when we get the word to fire. There is a billow of flame—a billow of smoke—a fierce crash—and 4,000 bullets are fired into that compact mass of advancing men. Not one volley alone, though that worked horrible destruction, but another and another, until there was not a living man to fire at.

The smoke drifts slowly away—men cheer and yell—we can see the meadow beyond heaped with dead and dying men. We advance our line. As we go forward I look for my victim. He is lying on his back, eyes half-shut and fingers clutching at the grass. He gasps, draws up his legs and straightens them out again, and is dead as I pass on. I have killed my man! My bullet struck him, tearing that ghastly wound in his breast, and I am entitled to all the honor. Do I swing my hat and cheer? Do I point him out and expect to be congratulated? No! I have no cheers. I feel no elation. I feel that I murdered him, war or no war, and his agonized face will haunt me through all the years of my life.

HEROINE OF THE CIVIL WAR.

Iowa Girl Who Carried Water to the Soldiers at Gettysburg During the Din of Battle.

In September a monument will be erected on the Gettysburg battlefield dedicated to the memory of a brave Iowa girl. It will bear these legends: On the front, "Jennie Wade, Killed While Making Bread for the Union Soldiers." On the reverse, "Erected by the Women's Relief Corps of Iowa, A. D. 1901." One side will bear these words: "Whatsover God Willeth Must Be, Though a Nation Mourn." On the other side will be: "She Hath Done What She Could."

Jennie Wade was one of the heroines of the civil war. She was killed by a stray minie ball of the confederates while making bread for the union soldiers in the little brick house of her sister, right in the stormiest and most dangerous part of the three days' battleground. The first day of the battle she drew and carried water from the windlass well, and filled the canteens of the union soldiers, amid the shrieking of shells and the awful din of the battle.

For 38 years her grave has remained unmarked. The movement for a monument started in 1899, at the close of the national encampment at Philadelphia, when the Iowa women spent a day at Gettysburg, and resolved to render homage to the memory of the brave Pennsylvania girl. The money is now all raised. The monument is to be of Barre granite and Italian marble, and will cost $800.

Chappie's Lost Opportunity.

"He was awful," said Chappie, indignantly. "He said if I opened my mouth again he'd put a head on me."

"Why didn't you accept his offer?"
—Harlem Life.

DRUMMER BOY OF SHILOH.

War Record of W. H. Mershon, Who at the Age of 55 Still Holds That Title.

W. H. Mershon, of Marion, Ind., recently celebrated his fifty-fifth birthday anniversary, but if he lives as long as Methuselah he will still be the "Drummer Boy of Shiloh," the brave boy who led the attack at that battle, saved his captain's life, and captured a confederate colonel. It all happened in about 60 seconds on the famous field of Shiloh—a fierce charge of the Thirtieth Indiana volunteer skirmishers on the flank of a southern battery. Will Mershon was the trumpeter, detailed from the drum corps, and rushing through a dense underbrush came out a few feet ahead of the company. The boyish heart stood still as he found himself in the presence of a confederate colonel, who was on horseback, reconnoitering the field. He instantly covered the boy with his revolver and commanded him to surrender. Mershon threw up his hands, showing he was unarmed.

At this instant Mershon's captain sprang from the thicket and the confederate, thinking the boy was weaponless, immediately covered the federal officer. But as he made the movement Mershon drew a revolver from his hip pocket and got the drop on the colonel.

It was a dramatic tableau, and the boys in blue who at that moment swung into line, rolled on the ground and kicked up their heels in an ecstasy of delight as the youthful trumpeter ordered the gray-headed officer to surrender. The crestfallen southerner obeyed, and the captain ordered him taken to the rear. The charge was continued and the battery captured a lieutenant colonel, a major, and the colonel being prisoners.

But Mershon received injuries that eventually put him on the veteran reserve corps, as about three o'clock in the afternoon a shell exploded on the ground to his right. He threw himself on his face and escaped being torn to pieces, though he was seriously injured on hip and spine.

That night as the soldiers gathered around the camp fire, the story was told of the plucky little bugler's being a prisoner for half a minute and then saving his captain's life by capturing his captor. In honor of his extraordinary exploits he was nicknamed the "Drummer Boy of Shiloh," and when he won the reputation of being the finest drummer in Uncle Sam's service, he bore no other name in the Army of the Cumberland and the Army of the Tennessee.

In June, 1864, Mershon was sent to Chicago and attached to the Fifteenth volunteer relief corps as drum major at Camp Douglas, a position which he held for a year. Dr. George F. Root, the composer, interviewed him on the incident and wrote "The Drummer Boy of Shiloh," a song that was popular for many years. The plates were burned in the great Chicago fire, and it is now out of print.

Prof. Mershon was one of the guards of honor when President Lincoln's body lay in state in Springfield. Naturally, his fame as a drummer brought him into intimate relations with many prominent officers, with whom he was a great favorite. He served as drummer in the Thirtieth Indiana volunteer infantry from September 13, 1861, to June 14, 1864, and from

THE DRUMMER BOY OF SHILOH.

June 14 to November 11, 1865, in the veterans' reserve.

Mr. Mershon is a musical genius, and not only juggles with drumsticks, but is a good vocalist and a performer on every instrument from a piccolo to a pipe organ. When he was 16 he graduated in piano and harmony under Prof. Struby, of Leipsic. Later he graduated in band and string instruments under Prof. Rowden, of Lovelon. At 20 he was a leader of the Fifteenth volunteer relief corps regulars, and at 21 was a member of the celebrated concert party—the Alleghanians. He has filled the chair of music in the University of Colorado, also Lane university, Kansas, and Greer college, Illinois, and is now at the head of the school of music in Marion, Ind.

Prof. Mershon has the most remarkable drum in the world—a rosewood shell, with ebony hoops bound with silver, the whole being beautifully inlaid. The centerpieces represent all manner of instruments, flowers and vines, worked out in different kinds of woods, there being 10,000 pieces. A solid silver shield is engraved:

"Presented to W. H. Mershon, 'The Drummer Boy of Shiloh,' by his old regiment, the Thirtieth Indiana volunteer infantry, Fort Wayne, Ind., May 25, 1895."

At a concert given in Chicago by the Ladies' Soldier Aid society in the winter of 1865, Prof. Mershon played his first match with Maj. "Billie" Nevins, and as winner was awarded a pair of rosewood, silver mounted, ivory-headed drumsticks. Soon after the "match" Col. J. R. Strong presented him with a fine silver drum, which, to Prof. Mershon's unspeakable sorrow, was stolen from his tent at Springfield when he was guarding Lincoln's tomb.

Why He Declined.

"Have a care, sir!" shrieked the Leading Lady to the Heavy Villain, while she tried to pull her train where the calcium light would strike it.

"No, thanks," hissed the Heavy Villain, "I've just had one."

True, he had just secured his divorce the day before, but it was so unlike him to drag his family affairs to the front in this manner.—Baltimore American.

She Was an Exception.

They had protested they were each other's first and only love.

"And this engagement ring—" he was beginning.

"I do not care for it. It's a style I'm not used to."

"Then let me tell you, you are the only girl who ever declined it on that account."—Philadelphia Times.

Against Her Rule.

"Cholly Dinsmore proposed to me 'ast night," confided Miss Bunting to Miss Killduff.

"Did you ask him if he could support you in the style to which you had been accustomed?"

"O, dear, no. I never ask men who propose to me that question."—Detroit Free Press.

Another Version.

The tramp he tackled a brand new bride
And asked her for something to eat;
"Will you give me some bread?" (but he meant a whole meal);
She consented with smiles that were sweet.
She brought him the half of a loaf, and said:
"Here's some of my very own!"
He took it, then faltered: "I asked you for bread,
And what do you give me?—a stone!"
—Philadelphia Bulletin.

WILLING TO SUFFER.

Girl—Are you a lover of music, professor?

Professor—Yes, I am; but it does not make any difference. Just go on and play away.—Heitere Welt.

Horse Sense.

There's a small grain of wisdom
Which runneth this way:
Men who have horse-sense
Know how to say "neigh."
—Philadelphia Record.

Chip of the Old Block.

"What a fine head your boy has," said an admiring friend.

"Yes," replied the fond father, "he's a chip of the old block—ain't you, my boy?"

"Yes, father; teacher said yesterday that I was a young blockhead."—Tit-Bits.

Could Testify Otherwise.

"It's all a lie," the tomcat howled,
As he quickly ran to cover,
While the missiles all around him flew,
"That the world adores a lover!"
—Chicago Tribune.

BECOMING AMERICANIZED.

First Chinese Laundryman—Hi ya! Me goin' to stlike—likee Melican man!

Second Chinese Laundryman—What for stlike?

First Chinese Laundryman—More yen, and 10 hours a day, 'stead of 20!—Brooklyn Life.

Reward of Merit.

Aunt Julie—Now, Tommy, that's a nice boy! Do the churning, and as a reward I'll let you turn the wringer for the new washing machine.—Harper's Bazar.

A Profit in Sight.

"Yes," said the man who prides himself on being exceedingly astute, "I lent him an umbrella."

"I am surprised at you! When his unreliability about umbrellas is one of his chief characteristics!"

"Yes. But I lent it with the understanding that he is to bring me back the one he gets in its place."—Washington Star.

A Match and a Mystery.

Her name was Short—his name was Long—
They married; now, you see,
She's always Long—he's always short—
How can such queer things be?
—Chicago Record-Herald.

MOVING IN EXTREMES.

Friend—How is your wife, old chap?

Mr. Henpeck—Last week she was dangerously ill and just now she is dangerously healthy.—Heitere Welt.

You Know Him.

He so eagerly tells all he knows.
We scarcely need stop to ask
The reason why, for it is because
It is such an easy task.
—Harlem Life.

Wrong Diagnosis.

"What's the matter, pet?"

"That big, ugly man you sent to look at poor Fido says he has distemper, and I told him it wasn't true, and I wanted him to go away. There's nothing at all the matter with Fido's temper. It's his poor little stomach!"—Chicago Tribune.

An Uncalculating Hero.

Helen—Oh, he is not at all mercenary.

Alice—But he doubtless knows you are worth two millions.

Helen—Yes; but he says he would love me just as much if I wasn't worth but a million and a half.—Judge.

'Twas Ever Thus.

Jones, like a fool, had poked his nose
'Twixt man and wife—and got the blows;
Quoth Jones: "It has been truly said,
Fools rush in where angels fear to tread."
—Chicago Daily News.

WASTE NOT, WANT NOT.

Sweet-Tempered Wife—I m glad you're takin' a wash, John—there ain't a drop o' ink in the place.—Ally Sloper.

In the Mountains.

Among the summer hills and dales
She wanders night and day,
Although she finds her searching fails,
For no man comes her way.
And while she vows she can't exist
Without a single one,
Yet all the summer through she's kissed,
But only by the sun.
—Leslie's Weekly.

He Wouldn't Be Busy.

"Let me see the funny paper," urged the little one.

"But I'm looking at it," replied her father.

"Oh, well," she returned, "you can look at it after supper, for you don't have to go out to play."—Chicago Post.

Easily Defined.

Inquiring Youth—Pa, what is a discriminating and differential duty?

Pa—A discriminating and differential duty, my son, is that sort of duty which impels your mother to call me "darling" in the parlor, and something else after the company has gone home.—N. Y. Times.